DISEC

I-THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION (JCPOA) AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

II-ENSURING REGIONAL STABILITY AND DISARMAMENT AFTER THE SECOND KARABAKH WAR

BESTMUN 25'

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1.2 Letter from the Under Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

It is my great honor to welcome you to this year's session of the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC). I would like to express my gratitude to my Secretary General Osman Batu, and Deputy-Secretary General Ayaulum, for giving me this opportunity, and their efforts while preparing for this prestigious conference BESTMUN'25. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Academic Assistant Ekin for her support, and dedication in preparing this committee. Her hard work ensures a smooth and engaging experience for all delegates, and I can't thank enough for her friendship.

This session presents us with complex and pressing challenges, from the nuances of regional conflicts, such as the Armenia–Azerbaijan dispute, to the ongoing discussions surrounding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and global nuclear non-proliferation. As delegates, you will have the opportunity to debate, negotiate, and craft solutions that not only reflect the interests of your assigned states but also contribute to the broader goal of maintaining international stability.

DISEC is a platform for critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership. I encourage each of you to engage fully, approach discussions with open-mindedness, and prioritize constructive diplomacy over confrontation. Your dedication, preparation, and creativity are essential to achieving meaningful resolutions that can have lasting impact.On behalf of the Secretariat, I extend my best wishes for a productive, insightful, and inspiring conference.

Please know that I am available to answer any questions you may have about the agenda, procedures, or committee dynamics. Do not hesitate to reach out, I am here to support you throughout the conference.

Sincerely,

Ceylin MUSALI

Under-Secretary-General

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1.3 Letter from the Academic Assistant

Honorable Participants, Distinguished Delegates,

I am incredibly honored to welcome you all to BESTMUN’25. My name is Ekin Toprak and I will be serving as the Academic Assistant of the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC).I am an 11th grade student at Ted Ankara College High School.

To begin with, I would like to thank the executive team of BESTMUN’25, Osman Batu and Ayaulum for their hard work for the conference. I would also like to thank my fellow under secretary general Ceylin Musalı for giving me the chance to serve as an academic assistant in such an incredible conference, as well as being one of my favourite people in MUN.

My advice for the committee members of DISEC would be to read the study guide thoroughly and use the internet for additional research.

If you have questions regarding the committee or the study guide, don't hesitate to contact me at ekin2964@gmail.com .

Kind regards,

Ekin Toprak - Academic Assistant of DISEC

2. Introduction to the Committee

2.1 General Assembly First Committee

Since being formed, DISEC has focused on stopping the spread of nuclear arms. A major move was backing the Non-Proliferation Treaty - known as NPT. Nearly all countries have joined it, showing real progress from DISEC's work.

2.2Past Actions

Beyond safety, the pact supports shared research into civilian atomic power. Starting in 2014, tensions linked to Russia and Ukraine entered discussions; several official statements were issued demanding peace, an end to fighting, respect for borders, and national independence.

2.3 Scope of DISEC

The various parts of the UN General Assembly aim at global collaboration and worldwide stability. While each unit contributes differently toward this goal, their influence is more limited than that of autonomous bodies with binding authority.

Following every meeting, a proposal gets voted on - passing or failing depending on what most decide. The General Assembly along with groups like DISEC lacks power to force nations or institutions to follow through on these outcomes. That's due to countries joining the UN by choice, allowing them to opt in or out of implementing such choices freely.

3.

3.1 Background of the Conflict

The dispute involving Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding Nagorno-Karabakh stretches far into history, shaped by cultural identity, land claims, and strategic interests built up over many generations. This highland area is officially acknowledged as Azerbaijani territory - yet its population has largely been ethnically Armenian throughout modern records.

The lands now called Azerbaijan and Armenia have seen many peoples, kingdoms, and empires come and go over thousands of years. Yet each country uses that deep past to back up its right to Nagorno-Karabakh - Artsakh, as Armenians name it.

Armenians lived in this area since the time of Urartu, followed by the ancient Kingdom of Armenia around the 2nd century BC. During that era, Artsakh formed part of historic Armenia; it kept serving as a hub for Armenian traditions, faith, and self-governing lordships - known as melikdoms - especially when ruled by outside powers like Persia or the Ottoman Empire.

Turkic tribes - forefathers of today's Azerbaijanis - started moving into the South Caucasus around the 1000s. Over time, rule shifted between different Turkic and Persian powers, including the Seljuk Empire; meanwhile, by the 1700s, the Karabakh Khanate emerged as an Islamic-led realm hosting multiple ethnic groups.

In the 1800s, after conflicts with Persia, Russia took control of large parts of the South Caucasus - such as today's Azerbaijan and Armenia - through the Gulistan Treaty (1813), then later the Turkmenchay agreement (1828). Under Russian rule, population patterns started changing, while distinct national identities gradually formed.

In the era of the Russian Empire, authorities supported Armenian moves into several Transcaucasian areas - among them zones now inside Azerbaijan. Gradually, Armenians formed lasting settlements in Karabakh, shaping its unique population makeup. When the empire fell apart, Armenia and Azerbaijan each proclaimed independence in 1918; soon after, disputes flared up over disputed lands like Nagorno-Karabakh

Soviet Era

The fall of the Russian Empire in 1917 brought short-lived independence for both the First Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, lasting from 1918 to 1920. At that time, conflicts emerged between them over regions like Nagorno-Karabakh, Zangezur, and Nakhchivan. Despite being new states, territorial disputes were unavoidable throughout this period.

In 1920, two republics fell under Soviet control, subsequently becoming part of the forming USSR. Due to territorial disputes, Joseph Stalin - responsible for ethnic affairs at the time - led a decision assigning mountainous Karabakh, largely Armenian-populated, to the Azerbaijani SSR. This took effect on July 7, 1923, once officials established the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

This decision sits central to current political conflict. In Azerbaijan's view, it was a lawful domestic setup within the USSR framework - approved through official channels. From Armenia's standpoint, though, Moscow acted deliberately, applying separation tactics to strengthen control by fueling discord among republics.

Although ethnic Armenians formed nearly 73% of the area's population by 1987, governance remained under Azerbaijani authority. That arrangement led to persistent tension - residents of Karabakh often felt disconnected from Baku, favoring either greater autonomy or unification with Armenia.

In the Soviet period, changes in where people lived became significant: when some Azerbaijanis left Armenian regions, others arrived - often from overseas - to take their place. Over time, these relocations increased friction slowly, since memories of ancestral ties and earlier expulsions colored how each side saw the past.

Rise of Nationalism and First Clashes (Late 1980s – Early 1990s)

When the Soviet Union weakened during the late 1980s, nationalism grew in Nagorno-Karabakh. By 1988, Karabakh's local council requested moving the region from Azerbaijan SSR to Armenia SSR - this sparked anger among many Azeris.

This change led Azerbaijan to end the area's unique self-rule - deepening tensions further. Shortly afterward, clashes began: Armenian-supported units on one side; Azerbaijani military on the opposite.

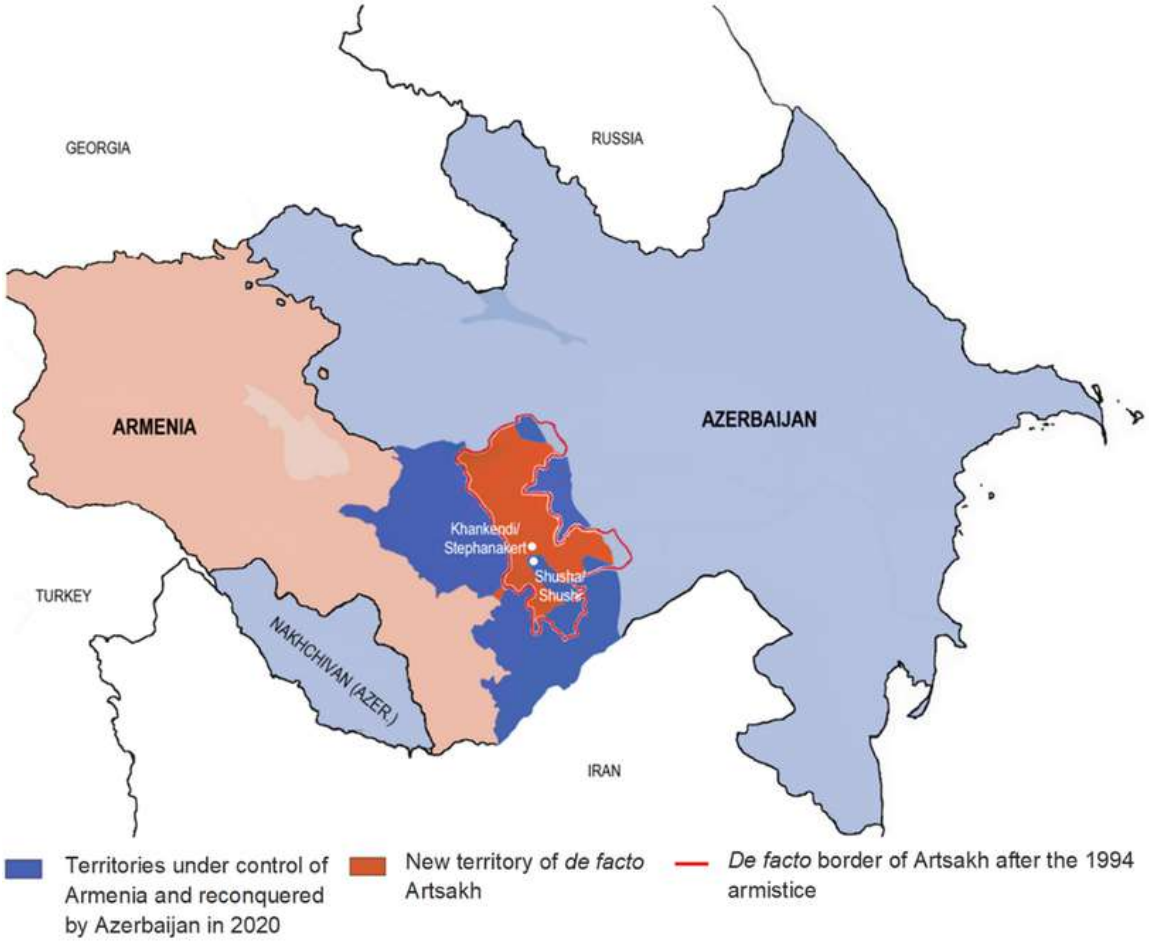
For a long time, little was said because Moscow kept tight control. Yet by the late 1980s, under Gorbachev's push for transparency and change, buried national feelings started reappearing.

In February 1988, the regional council of the NKAO voted to ask for a shift from Azerbaijan SSR to Armenian SSR - this move had never happened before in the USSR; thus began the public clash.

Violent incidents against ethnic Armenians broke out in Sumgait - a city in Azerbaijan - in early 1988. Following this, tensions flared up later in Bakı. Meanwhile, Armenian troops attacked Azeri non-combatants near Kapan. These actions eroded trust from both sides. Because of that, mass displacements took place across the region.

Operation Ring took place in 1991; it was a coordinated effort between Soviet forces and Azerbaijani OMON targeting Armenian militia disarmament in the NKAO along with nearby settlements - this included coerced removals of ethnic Armenians, escalating tensions through increased military presence.

After the USSR ended in 1991, Armenia and Azerbaijan became independent. The NKAO split off to create the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic; still, no United Nations member recognized it - Armenia included.



3.1 Historical Background of the Conflict

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh has deep historical roots, combining ethnic, territorial, and geopolitical dimensions that date back centuries. Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous region internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, but historically and demographically dominated by ethnic Armenians.

The territories of modern-day Azerbaijan and Armenia have been inhabited by various peoples, kingdoms, and empires for millennia. Both nations point to this ancient history to substantiate their claims to the Nagorno-Karabakh region, known as Artsakh to Armenians.

Armenian presence in the region goes back to the period of the Urartu Kingdom and the Kingdom of Armenia (circa 2nd century BC). Artsakh was one of the provinces of historical Armenia and remained a center of Armenian culture, religion, and autonomous principalities (melikdoms) even during periods of foreign rule, particularly under Persian and Ottoman suzerainty.

Turkic-speaking tribes, who are the ancestors of modern Azerbaijanis, began settling in the Transcaucasus region from the 11th century onwards. The area came under the control of various Turkic and Persian dynasties, such as the Seljuks, and the Khanate of Karabakh, established in the 18th century, was a Muslim-ruled entity with a diverse population.

During the 19th century, following the Russo-Persian Wars, the Russian Empire took over much of the South Caucasus, including the territories of modern Azerbaijan and Armenia, via the Treaties of Gulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828). This imperial period saw the beginning of modern demographic shifts and the crystallization of national identities.

During the Russian Empire, the imperial administration encouraged Armenian settlement in a number of Transcaucasian territories, including parts of what is now Azerbaijan. Over time, Armenians established strong communities in Karabakh, contributing to the region's distinctive demographic mix. After the collapse of the Russian Empire, both Armenia and Azerbaijan declared independent states (1918), and tensions erupted over contested regions, including Nagorno-Karabakh.

Soviet Era: Institutionalization of the Dispute

The collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 led to a brief period of independence for the First Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920). During this time, the two republics clashed over Nagorno-Karabakh, Zangezur, and Nakhchivan. Though newly formed, neither could avoid territorial tensions during those years.

In 1920, two republics came under Soviet rule and joined the emerging USSR. To settle land conflicts, Joseph Stalin - then head of national policies, oversaw a ruling that placed highland Karabakh, mostly inhabited by Armenians, inside the Azerbaijani SSR. The move became official on July 7, 1923, when authorities formed the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

This choice lies at the heart of today's political clash. For Azerbaijan, it represented a valid internal arrangement inside one country - the Soviet Union - carried out under legal authority. Yet for Armenia, Moscow made this move on purpose, using division to hold power by deepening tensions between republics.

Even though Armenians made up most of the region around 73% in 1987 it stayed under Azerbaijan's political control. This setup caused ongoing strain: people in Karabakh frequently saw themselves as separate from Baku's rule, pushing instead for more self-rule or joining Armenia.

In the Soviet era, population shifts mattered: some Azerbaijanis moved from Armenian areas, whereas Armenians, many arriving from abroad, were invited into those lands. These moves deepened tensions gradually, because stories about past roots and forced departures shaped opposing views of history.

Rise of Nationalism and First Clashes (Late 1980s – Early 1990s)

As the Soviet Union began to weaken in the late 1980s, nationalist movements in Nagorno-Karabakh increased. In 1988, the regional Soviet council in Karabakh petitioned to transfer the oblast from the Azerbaijan SSR to the Armenian SSR, triggering widespread outrage among Azerbaijani residents.

Because of this move, Azerbaijan removed the region's special administrative status, which only made conflicts worse. Soon after, fighting broke out on one side Armenian-backed troops, on the other Azerbaijani forces.

For many years, the matter stayed quiet due to strict rule from Moscow. Still, during the late 1980s, when Gorbachev introduced openness and reform, hidden national pride began to emerge again.

In February 1988 The regional soviet of the NKAO passed a resolution to formally request transfer from the Azerbaijan SSR to the Armenian SSR. This act was unprecedented in the Soviet Union and marked the beginning of the open conflict.

Violent attacks on ethnic Armenians erupted in Sumgait, an industrial city in Azerbaijan, during February 1988. Afterward, clashes between communities spread to Baku. At the same time, Armenian forces targeted Azerbaijani civilians in Kapan. As a result, mutual confidence collapsed. Consequently, large-scale forced migrations began.

Operation Ring occurred in 1991. A joint Soviet military and Azerbaijani OMON operation aimed at disarming Armenian militias in the NKAO and surrounding villages, which involved forced deportations of Armenians, further militarized the conflict.

Following the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, both Armenia and Azerbaijan declared independence. The NKAO broke away to form the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, yet no UN country accepted this, even Armenia did not. Then, a full war began among these new nations.

First Nagorno-Karabakh War and Humanitarian Consequences

Armenian troops took control of Nagorno-Karabakh along with multiple nearby Azerbaijani regions. This fighting led to massive loss; around twenty to thirty thousand people lost their lives; more than a million others left their homes, primarily ethnic Azerbaijanis escaping occupied zones. Forces from Armenia combined with local Karabakh units secured strong dominance, seizing both the former autonomous region and seven adjacent areas (Lachin, Kelbajar, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Qubadli, Zangilan). Those territories belonged to Azerbaijan under law and once housed almost exclusively Azerbaijani residents, now completely removed. Around 20,000–30,000 individuals perished during combat while over one million became either refugees or internally displaced civilians, most being citizens of Azerbaijan.

Khojaly Massacre

A major tragedy took place in 1992 - the Khojaly Massacre. This town lies within Nagorno-Karabakh, an area of Azerbaijan; it sits near vital paths linking Stepanakert to parts of Azerbaijan. Before fighting began, roughly 6,000 ethnic Azeris lived there

- mostly non-combatants. By early that year, violence intensified when Armenian troops, together with regional Armenian units, surrounded the settlement. Cut off from support or supplies, residents faced worsening hardship as escape became nearly impossible.

On the evening of February 25–26, 1992, Armenian troops moved into Khojaly. As a result, thousands of non-combatants tried escaping to areas held by Azerbaijan. While fleeing, numerous men, women, kids, and older people lost their lives. Reports differ on exact numbers; however, many accounts state that fatalities ranged from 200 to 613 civilians, along with injuries or detentions.

Eyewitness accounts plus inquiries showed numerous civilians died trying to flee through mined zones - or were shot by troops en route. The event included kidnappings along with brutal conditions. Many view it as a key tragedy of the First Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; Baku labels it targeted ethnic removal.

The global community reacted to the escalating violence in Nagorno-Karabakh through multiple UN Security Council decisions - namely 822, 853, 874, and 884 - all issued in 1993. Though passed following the Khojaly tragedy, these measures focused on the wider hostilities; among them was concern over seized areas within Azerbaijan.

- **Resolution 822 (April 30, 1993)** – Called on Armenia to respect Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and demanded the immediate cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of occupying forces from Azerbaijani regions surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh.

- **Resolution 853 (July 29, 1993)** – Condemned continued military actions by Armenian forces and reaffirmed the demand for withdrawal from occupied areas, emphasizing respect for international law.

- **Resolution 874 (October 14, 1993)** – Urged both parties to adhere to previous resolutions, cooperate with the OSCE Minsk Group, and facilitate humanitarian access to affected populations.

- **Resolution 884 (November 12, 1993)** – Expressed grave concern about the humanitarian situation, condemned violations of Azerbaijan's territorial sovereignty, and reinforced calls for a ceasefire and withdrawal from occupied regions.

These resolutions collectively recognized Azerbaijan's sovereignty, demanded cessation of hostilities, and called for respect for international law and human rights. However, enforcement mechanisms were limited, and Armenian forces remained in control of large parts of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts until the 2020 war.

3.2 The Nagorno-Karabakh Issue: Origins and Developments

Despite the ceasefire, the conflict remained unresolved. Nagorno-Karabakh continued to be administered de facto by Armenian authorities, and numerous diplomatic efforts have since taken place — notably within the OSCE Minsk Group framework (co-

chaired by Russia, the U.S., and France), but a comprehensive peace treaty has never been achieved.

In May 1994, a Russian-brokered ceasefire agreement, known as the Bishkek Protocol, was signed, halting the hostilities. The ceasefire lines held, effectively freezing the conflict for the next 26 years.

The post-war status quo was a decisive military victory for the Armenian side. However, it left Azerbaijan controlling only 15% of its internationally recognized territory, creating a deeply unstable and unsustainable situation that sowed the seeds for future conflict.

The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War (2020)

This was a military operation that occurred in the disputed area of Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent territories that are under occupation. It was a significant step-up in a very tense, unsolved conflict on the territory between Azerbaijan, Armenia and the self-declared Armenian breakaway republic of Artsakh. The war lasted for 44 days and resulted in Azerbaijani victory, with the defeat igniting anti-government protests in Armenia. Post-war battles continued in the area, including large scale battles and 2022.

Hostilities started in the morning of 27 September when an offensive by Azerbaijan occurred along the Line of Contact created as the result of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1988-1994). Clashes were particularly intense in the less mountainous districts of southern Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkiye provided military support to Azerbaijan.

The Nagorno-Karabakh War could be recognised by the use of rotary-wing drones, sensors, heavy long-range artillery and missile attacks, and by state-sponsored propaganda and the conduct of official social media accounts to support war time information warfare. Drone attacks in Azerbaijan, its role in setting the battle course, was considered key to the conflict's resolution. Many member states and the United Nations highly criticized the fighting and urged both sides to minimize the escalations of the fighting and resume earnest negotiations. Three ceasefires by Russia, France, and the United States failed to stop the conflict.

After the occupation of Shusha, the second largest city in Nagorno-Karabakh, a cessation of hostilities agreement was reached, stopping all fighting in the region from 10 November 2020. That agreement brought about a fundamental change in the status of control of the territories of Nagorno-

Karabakh and the surrounding regions. About 2,000 Russian soldiers were stationed there as a peacekeeping unit along the Lachin corridor between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, with a commitment of no less than five years.

3.3 Role of regional powers

The South Caucasus is one of the most diverse areas in the world, as well as the main region of various historical conflicts due to its geopolitical location and natural resources, along with acting as a bridge between East and West. One of them is Nagorno-Karabakh, a longstanding conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over a high, landlocked disputed territory. The region is predominantly ethnically Armenian, while the land lies within Azerbaijan and borders Armenia. Although not directly neighboring the region, Russia, Turkiye and Iran have major influence on it.

During the Soviet Union, the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh was placed under Soviet Azerbaijani administration. The conflict broke out in late 1980s, in which the regional parliament of Nagorno Karabakh wanted to unify with Armenia, escalating tensions with Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan sought to suppress the movement, while Armenia supported it. Following the referendum, in which the Armenians in the region desired to unite with Armenia while Azerbaijanis refused to vote, the region started to unite with Armenia.

As the Soviet Union fell apart, the tensions grew into extreme conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, resulting in ethnic cleansing which includes the Sumgait and Baku pogroms against Armenians and the Gugark pogrom and Khojaly Massacre aimed against Azerbaijanis. By this time, people had already started fleeing their

homes because of the instability. As the Soviet Union lost its power, Moscow lost control of the region.

In 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed, Azerbaijan declared independence and the Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh held another referendum, where they declared independence as the “Republic of Nagorno Karabakh”. Azerbaijan aimed to destroy Karabakh’s autonomy and sent military troops to the region in order to maintain control. Armenian forces resisted, leading to all out warfare. The war lasted 6 years, resulting in deaths of around thirty thousand individuals as well as dozens of refugees.

The involvement of Russia, Turkiye and Iran throughout the war is non- negligible. These regional stakeholders, driven by political, financial and national notices, influence the conflict’s path, impacting it in varying degrees of constructive and destructive aspects.

Beginning with Russia’s role, it is important to note that the USSR had control of the region in the start of the conflict, thus Moscow aimed to maintain control. After the establishment of the USSR, the country granted Nagorno-Karabakh the status of autonomy, but with subordination to the Azerbaijan SSR. The Armenian government and people were dissatisfied, although they couldn't do much because of the union's authoritarian regime.

However, as the Soviet regime weakened, tensions began to escalate. The USSR intended to sustain control but despite the efforts, Russian troops couldn’t be successful due to the lack of stability. After the demand to unify with Armenia, the conflict accelerated. Following the collapse of the USSR, Russia took over the

military frameworks in the region, becoming the main external force involved. The USSR didn’t exist anymore, thus Russia was a separate country from Armenia or Azerbaijan with its own interests. Russia's main aim throughout the war was to preserve control in the area, as well as making sure no other state dominated it. Before the collapse of the USSR, the country funded Azerbaijan since it wanted to maintain territorial unity. Despite the efforts, key events like Black January and the Operation ring failure indicated that the USSR's power was settling.

Following the collapse of the USSR, both states declared independence. Russia remained neutral throughout the first war, although providing Armenia with weapons and equipment. During the 2020 war, Russia provided both states with equipment, being the biggest supplier of both Azerbaijan and Armenia. Russia also aimed to mediate a ceasefire through the war, but it couldn’t succeed until November 2020, when the country finally achieved success in mediating a ceasefire between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia. The results of the ceasefire were ending the war but granting Russia a new military presence in the region. Russia established 2,000 peacekeepers along the Armenian controlled region.

Following Turkiye, throughout the first war, the state showed full support to Azerbaijan, refusing to recognise the independence of Nagorno Karabakh. The Turkish-Azeri blockade was implemented in 1989, with Turkiye joining in 1993, which is an ongoing transportation and economic embargo against Armenia. It is important to note that in 1992, Azerbaijan and Turkiye signed an agreement on “Cooperation on military education”, which allowed Azerbaijan’s military to have access to a NATO member states’ military education and structure. Within the

structure of this agreement, certain staff of Azerbaijan's armed forces would receive training at the Turkish Military Academy, the Turkish War Academy, the Gülhane Military Medical Academy, and the non-commissioned officer schools. In 2010, the "Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Support" was signed, meaning that both states would support each other in the case of a military attack. After this treaty, both states conducted frequent military visits to each other. Turkiye's support was undeniable in building Azerbaijan's army, which helped the state succeed in the Second Nagorno Karabakh war.

During the 2020 Second Nagorno-Karabakh war, Turkiye supplied Azerbaijan with weapons and technology, although the statistics showed that Azerbaijan's major provider was Russia. Turkiye's main role during the 2020 war was not an instant one, it was assisting Azerbaijan's military framework through the years.

The last state we will be mentioning is Iran, which was one of the key regional powers through the conflict. The country has a large Azerbaijani population, which is around 12 to 23 million people. After the fall of the USSR, many states around Iran declared independence, including Azerbaijan. As mentioned previously, the country has a large Azerbaijani population, thus the independence of Azerbaijan could have been a security threat for the country. Because of the North Azerbaijani Turks, who regained their independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iran saw the situation as a provoking element regarding their citizens in South Azerbaijan; thus it preferred to increase its activity in the region by implementing certain policies. During the first war the state remained neutral as its main concern was its own unity. Through the second war, the state officially declared neutrality, though the Iranian

administration did not close the Norduz Border Gate and permitted supplies to get to Armenia under the name of food aid. This caused protests from the Turks of South Azerbaijan. It is important to note that Azerbaijan, Turkiye and Israel's cooperation had a significant effect on shaping Iran's policies towards Armenia, since the state perceived this collaboration as a potential threat against territorial security. Under the circumstances, the state kept closer connections with Armenia although officially being neutral, and decided to keep its border open.

3.4. Impact on Regional Security and Arms Proliferation

The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War wasn't just a local fight; rather, it signaled shifts in how modern combat is viewed worldwide. One major effect involves changes in battlefield strategies using drones - alongside this, unexpected types of dangers have now emerged on geopolitical stages.

The 2020 conflict clearly showed how off-the-shelf tech can undermine established armed forces. Since then, analysts have examined it closely - highlighting drones used together with ground units to shift battle outcomes. This example reshaped defense thinking across many countries.

The "Layered" Drone Arsenal and Its Effects

Azerbaijan’s military edge came from using various drones in smart, layered ways - each system had its own role. Instead of relying on just one kind, they used multiple tools together.

Medium-Altitude Long-Endurance (MALE) drones, such as the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 - these function as attack-capable scouts. Instead of brief passes, they stay above combat zones beyond a full day, maintaining watch while hitting objectives precisely with laser-targeted weapons. Beyond attacking directly, their key role involved neutralizing enemy radar and missile setups. By methodically locating then eliminating outdated Armenian air shields - including S-300 units, close-range defense arrays, and field guns - they cleared skies for follow-up actions. Using jamming plus disabling enemy radar, they opened space for weaker planes and unmanned units to move in. Besides that, these systems worked well versus armor, APCs, or transport vehicles, frequently hitting them during transit.

Loitering Munitions, Suicide Drones, Israeli Harop and SkyStriker:

These function like drones but act as missiles. While hovering near a location for hours, they stay on standby until something appears. When a target shows up, the user sends it into a dive, causing both to explode upon impact - similar to a suicide strike. Because they’re hard to detect on radar and hit without much notice, these weapons led attacks early in conflicts. They hit critical spots hard - like radar sites, command centers, comms hubs, or fixed gun emplacements. The mental toll was severe; those on the ground had no real way to respond, just waiting under constant threat from unpredictable angles.

Small, Reconnaissance Drones:

These compact, low-cost setups delivered live video plus targeting data to Azerbaijan’s artillery teams. When a lightweight drone detected an enemy gun or armored vehicle, it sent back location details; shortly after, precise shellfire or another drone eliminated the threat. As a result, Armenia’s conventional tanks and cannons - central elements of their defense - became exposed and mostly useless.

Global Implications for Arms Proliferation and Modern Warfare

The clash showed one doesn't require an expensive air fleet with high-tech jets to control airspace. As a result, more countries can now obtain sophisticated defense tools.

Forces built around big, fixed, costly systems - such as heavy tanks or field artillery - that lack up-to-date, fast-moving anti-air cover are now viewed as highly exposed. Because of this shift, countries worldwide have begun rapidly investing in sophisticated unmanned aircraft, along with tools designed to stop those same drones.

The visible achievements of Turkey’s and Israel’s defense programs have increased foreign sales of their weapons. Because of this, nations are rushing to build, buy, or copy comparable systems. As a result, such technologies spread more quickly into

unstable areas. With fewer risks seeming tied to attacks, leaders may find aggression easier to justify.

3.5 International Mediation Attempts

As mentioned previously, the issue began when the USSR still had control of the region; therefore, the USSR tried to preserve control but failed as the nationalist actions in Armenia and Azerbaijan escalated.

After the fall of the USSR, Iran stepped in, creating the Tehran Communique between Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, which aimed to resolve the situation through peaceful actions. It failed the day after it was signed, when Armenian troops attacked and captured the Azerbaijani town of Shusha. In 1994, Russia's efforts to mediate a ceasefire had finally succeeded and the Bishkek Protocol was adopted. It was signed by Armenia, Azerbaijan, the unrecognized Republic of Artsakh, and Russia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The Protocol managed to mediate a fragile ceasefire and freeze the war but it did not fully stabilize the region since the ceasefire had been unpaused several times.

After the Bishkek Protocol, the negotiation and mediation efforts were primarily led by the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The Minsk Group led peace talks but couldn’t achieve much success. In 1995, The Mink’s Group presented several proposals on the conflict. One of them was about strengthening the Ceasefire, but it was only partially effective. Crucial breakouts of violence in 2008 and 2012 expressed the fragility of peace. Another proposal presented by the Mink’s Group was called “The Madrid Principles” (2007).

It included a framework that had principles of territorial integrity and self governance for Nagorno-Karabakh, but these were turned down by both sides.

After the beginning of the second Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020, several states, including Russia, France, and the United States, attempted to broker a ceasefire, but they failed. Following the capture of Shusha in Nagorno Karabakh, on November 9 2020, Russia successfully negotiated a ceasefire agreement, ending the Second Nagorno Karabakh war. The agreement included a complete ceasefire, the deployment of approximately 1,960 Russian peacekeepers along the Lachin corridor and the contact line in Nagorno-Karabakh, the establishment of a peacemaking center and the removal of blockage on economic and transport links. After the agreement, the region was more stable, although no matter how much international bodies have tried, stability and peace were never fully ensured in the region, and the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh was still unaddressed.

3.6. Humanitarian and Security Implications

The Mercenary Factor

The alleged deployment of Syrian combatants, moved into battle zones by Turkey, added a risky factor. When external, irregular forces take part, it’s unclear who answers for battlefield behavior or possible violations of war law thus shifting accountability. Determining responsibility for specific acts grows complicated, which

hampers efforts to achieve justice and healing after fighting stops. Using proxy fighters may lower the barrier to starting conflicts, yet prolongs them due to overlapping interests among various armed groups.

The flow of experienced fighters across hotspots - like Syria, Libya, or Nagorno-Karabakh - builds global links where combat methods spread; this also fuels unrest in fragile areas. Under International Humanitarian Law, employing mercenaries faces strong disapproval - highlighted by treaties such as the UN Convention targeting recruitment, funding, and training. Because these actors often lack clear leadership structures, tracing blame for serious violations becomes highly challenging.

Landmines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

The areas now back under Azerbaijan's authority rank among the most mine-infested globally; this goes beyond human concern, posing deep risks to safety and order - yet it also ties into broader regional resilience.

Landmines along with unexploded cluster bombs can't tell soldiers from civilians - whether farmers or kids heading back home. Large areas become unfit for farming, building roads, or letting displaced families safely come back due to these devices. Mines are frequently laid without proper documentation, creating lasting hurdles to rebuilding towns and resuming daily routines. This drags out recovery after war ends, keeping affected regions trapped in instability and financial strain. The question of

sharing correct minefield maps turned into a key dispute after the war. Because Armenia was late and failed to fully hand over the data, Azerbaijan claims this was intentional sabotage - making demining an arena for political conflict, damaging ties and blocking mutual confidence. Clearing mines remains risky, costly, and time-consuming. Widespread dangers freeze regional growth, stopping critical transit routes such as the Zangezur Corridor from being built along with farms or public works. This ongoing danger sustains instability that may endure many years.

Azerbaijan keeps insisting on Armenia to hand over full records of mines placed during its control period. Baku claims these are partial and wrong, suggesting it's intentional damage to reconciliation efforts. Such disputes shift what should be a safety matter into tense political conflict.

The "Right of Return"

A key focus since the war ended has been Azerbaijan's effort to bring back hundreds of thousands of displaced people to their original homes. That underscores how vital the legal right to return remains internationally. Making sure this comeback is safe - through mine removal and restoring basic services - has become a major priority for regional stability and global institutions such as the UN.

Civilian Casualties and Infrastructure Destruction

The 44-day war brought intense human pain - this later turned into ongoing displacement, psychological harm, and rising human rights issues. Heavy weapons, missiles, or drones struck towns full of people during fighting. Ganja, Barda, and

Mingachevir in Azerbaijan together with Stepanakert in Nagorno-Karabakh took direct hits because of attacks. Civilians died where bombs landed while houses, medical centers, classrooms, even electricity networks and water supply systems, suffered major damage across affected zones.

Prisoners of War (POWs)

The years after the war saw ongoing disputes about prisoner swaps and claims of secret detentions. Each side insists the other isn't returning captives completely or fairly. Tensions persist due to unresolved cases and mutual distrust lingering from past conflicts.

This problem causes serious human hardship, affecting people and relatives alike - while also damaging talks and weakening confidence between nations. The Geneva Conventions apply here; claims of breaches have come up on both ends.

3.7 Present Developments and Ceasefire Agreements

After the Ceasefire Agreement in 2020, several meetings have taken place and several actions have been taken. On 30 January 2021, a joint monitoring center in the Aghdam region of Azerbaijan became operational, as mentioned previously in the Second Nagorno-Karabakh ceasefire agreement. The center was going to be operated by Russia and Turkiye and its main tasks were monitoring the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh and preventing breaching of law. The center operated until 26 April 2024, when the ceremonial closing was attended by Chief of the General Staff of the Azerbaijani Army Karim Valiyev, ambassadors of Turkey and Russia to Azerbaijan. Karim Valiyev mentioned that Azerbaijan had fully established its sovereignty in Karabakh, thus the aim of the monitoring center had been accomplished. On January 11, 2021, a meeting between President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan was held at the initiative of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The meeting focused on implementing the ceasefire agreement and arranging the territory's recovery post-war. Several meetings after this one were held, such as the Brussels meeting and the Sochi Trilateral meeting. The main goals of these were maintaining stability, security, and tranquility in the region. It is important to mention the 3+3 South Caucasus Regional Cooperation Platform, which includes Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkiye and Russia. The platform was proposed in 2020 by Turkiye and its initiative is to boost multilateral cooperation in the region, as well as addressing regional issues without external interference. On December 10, 2021, the first meeting of the consultative regional platform at the level of deputy foreign ministers of the five countries was held in Moscow. After the third meeting held in Istanbul on 18 October 2024, a joint declaration was adopted.

The Declaration highlighted the importance of regional economic partnership to trust building between countries, together with profitability and stability.

The Armenia-Azerbaijan peace plan, formally called the Agreement "On Building Peace and State-Level Ties Between Armenia and Azerbaijan," seeks to stop the lasting dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. On August 8, 2025, Armenia's leader Nikol Pashinyan along with Azerbaijan's head Ilham Aliyev - backed by U.S. President Donald Trump - reached a mutual understanding; they put forward a shared statement stressing follow-up actions leading to full approval of the deal.

One concession made by Armenia is the withdrawal of Russian defensive forces from the Armenia-Azerbaijani border.

A separate aspect of the deal involves building a passage - called the "Zangezur corridor" in Turkish and Azerbaijani reports - that connects central Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan, an exclave cut off by 32 kilometers of Armenian land. Although this path lies within Armenia's borders and follows local regulations, the U.S. gains sole authority to manage development there for nearly a century. Since former American leader Donald Trump helped arrange the pact, it's now referred to as the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP). Right now, movement across the zone remains limited because Turkey and Azerbaijan continue restricting access. The main aim aside, finishing the route could let travelers and cargo move from Europe to Azerbaijan - and onward to Central Asia - without crossing Russia or Iran. Both Iran

and Russia criticize U.S. involvement in the planned TRIPP initiative, calling it interference.

Some in Iran and Russia see the corridor as U.S. overreach, criticizing it strongly. Meanwhile, Armenian analysts view the agreement as approval of Azerbaijan's aggressive actions toward Armenians in both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

The strategic transit route between Armenia and Azerbaijan is planned to be named the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity, or TRIPP, and the development rights to the project are guaranteed to the United States for 99 years. Under the agreement, the US would sublease the land to a consortium that will develop rail, oil, gas, and fiber optic lines, as well as possibly electricity transmission, along the 43-kilometre (27 mi) route.

The agreement limits Russia's role in the South Caucasus, since Armenia has moved closer to Western allies after Azerbaijan reclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh by force in 2023. This shift boosts American economic and security connections there instead. At the same time, it weakens the OSCE Minsk Group - a mediation effort led by Moscow that is now seen as outdated. As a result, Washington takes over from Moscow as the leading peace broker in the area.

A US representative informed Axios the key aim is limiting Iran's, Russia's, or China's role in the South Caucasus. This path lets travelers and cargo move from Turkey to Azerbaijan - and further into Central Asia - by avoiding Iranian or Russian territory.

According to US Senator Steve Daines, the deal will allow energy and mineral exports from the region, bypassing Russia and China.

In the meantime, Iran warned it might stop the proposed path due to safety issues, even though it had previously supported the wider peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Iran along with Russia has denounced U.S. involvement in the planned Zangezur route, calling it interference. Analysts have questioned the peace terms due to their failure to secure returns for displaced ethnic Armenians after Azerbaijan’s prolonged military push lasting nine months. Aram Hamparian, head of the Armenian National Committee of America, remarked that “calling ethnic cleansing normal isn't achieving peace,” viewing the deal as built on wiping out Nagorno-Karabakh's identity, leaving sacred places behind, ignoring captives, while strengthening Azerbaijani control.

Iranian leaders have often expressed worries about the plan. Right from the start, Tehran made clear it opposes shifts in regional boundaries across the Caucasus - so it resists this initiative. The route might block Iran’s overland path to Armenia, which causes concern. In September 2024, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said altering borders of nearby nations crosses a limit for Iran - it cannot be accepted. His statement followed remarks by Russia favoring continued dialogue on an Azerbaijan-Armenia peace deal and creating a land link. Russia tends to back new transit links from Azerbaijan into Nakhchivan. Lately, Tehran viewed remarks by Russian figures as hints that Moscow sides with Baku on advancing the Zangezur route.

The Zangezur Corridor aims to connect Azerbaijan with Nakhchivan, then onward to Türkiye. As for the Turkish part, construction began on August 22 for the Kars–Dilucu rail line. According to Transport and Infrastructure Minister Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, it will span 224 km. This route should handle around 5.5 million travelers along with 15 million tonnes of cargo.

4.1 Nuclear Weapons

a.Weapons of Mass Destruction

State and Sovereignty

An ever-present dynamic in the international system is the state's concern for security, which calls for a clear definition of what constitutes a "state"—or, as it has been largely superseded in contemporary literature, a "nation-state." A country is a group of people who have something in common, and share a national identity based on language, culture, and history. According to IR researchers, on the other hand, a state is a sovereign, geographical entity that is home to its population and run by national authorities. Political scientists contend that a state must be able to exert both internal and external sovereignty, that is, its institutions must be accepted as public institutions of civil society, and the state is an association of territory and exercises dominance and legitimacy.

By definition, the state is the only entity with sovereign authority inside its borders, yet the state's ability to use that authority is constrained. In addition to the nation's internal political mechanisms, such as its constitution or regime, states may be bound by international agreements or by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)

that have binding power over a state's sovereignty and methods of exercising authority.

Through bilateral or multilateral non-proliferation agreements, international law and institutions contribute to the maintenance of peace by reducing the number of wars that are started.Treaties involving three or more nations are known as multilateral treaties. Treaties signed by two nations are known as bilateral treaties. One of its primary goals is collective security, which is achieved by other governments coming to the aid of a member state that is under danger of attack impose collective penalties (economic sanctions) on the perpetrator.

The UN's two roles in maintaining and promoting peace are peacemaking and peacekeeping. UN peace-making is the procedure by which the UN effectively intervenes to stop a conflict from starting; it is carried out before the war, typically in situations where there are tensions between two ethnic groups and a civil war danger. After a civil war, the UN maintains peace by negotiating agreements for a cease fire and sends a peace-keeping force to stand between warring parties, currently there are 18 missions in total.

International Law and UN Charter

Liberals view international law and organizations as important because they assist governments in resolving conflicts between competing interests that arise while doing collective action. States are logical agents that aspire to maximize their profits in accordance with their own interests and establish a forum where governments can settle their disputes over trust and transparency, which removes the

disorderly aspect of the international system and improves everyone's lot. International institutions operate on the principle of collaboration and provide strong incentives for conformity. Realists, on the other hand, contend that powerful governments are the ones who construct international law and institutions and that these entities represent their interests.

The rights and duties that nations have toward other states, actors, and their inhabitants are outlined by international law; the UN Charter, also known as the "law of the UN," is the universal international law that is typically implemented in the international system. Unlike the UNSC, the UN General Assembly has equal representation and voting rights for all member states, but its decisions are not legally binding. Unlike national legal systems, membership in an international system of laws or treaties is entirely voluntary because there is no universal application of the law. There are many "islands" in international law that deal with distinct subjects, are not inherently bound by a hierarchy of norms or a legal hierarchy, and do not intrude onto one another's legal domains. There is no "precedent decision" or reference body in the international jurisdiction (except from the ICC), in contrast to the Anglo-Saxon domestic legal system.

The effectiveness of international law and organizations is up for debate because membership, adherence, and compliance are voluntary and have no legal force; additionally, there is no central or worldwide enforcer of the law (with some exceptions, like the WTO)—that is, unlike domestic laws systems, and international security and peace are not required, particularly for major powers, as they frequently

violate their own obligations under international law Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Additionally, there are issues with legitimacy, as some international institutions lose their credibility as a result of humanitarian tragedies. Liberals contend that because democratic governments have more legal protections, they tend to adhere to laws more than authoritarian states.

As international organizations gain experience, they become more efficient and offer monitoring so that each member state may keep an eye on compliance, which helps to solve security issues. However, realists contend that a state must adhere to just two requirements in order to abide by international law and treaties freely. One possible scenario is that states must come together against a common enemy in order to form alliances and international organizations and make promises to one another. In such a scenario, states are more likely to honor their agreements and comply with one another's demands, as demonstrated by the formation of NATO in response to the Soviet threat. The second scenario is a state of hegemony, in which a hegemonic authority establishes a mechanism and often coerces members, such as the Warsaw Pact signed by the Soviet Union. Realists hold that great powers uphold international law because they negotiate laws to suit their own national interests and consent to be bound by them. They also create institutions to further their interests, and as a result, they obey the decisions made by these institutions.

Jus ad bellum is the name of the curriculum of international law that regulates the use of force between nations. Jus ad bellum establishes the boundaries of when force against another state is permissible. Jus contra bellum is another name for it,

which refers to the fact that it is a legal system founded on the universal ban on the use of force between states.

With two widely acknowledged exceptions, the use of force is forbidden by both UN Charter and customary international law. First, in order to preserve and reestablish peace and security, the United Nations Security Council may approve the use of force. The Security Council is required to take action under the collective security framework established by Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in case of an act of violence, a breach of the peace, or a threat to the peace. Authorizing military action is one of these measures. Second, while defending themselves against an armed attack, nations are permitted to employ force.

Not every act of force qualifies as an assault with weapons. The right to self-defense is contingent upon the presence of a specific level of seriousness in an armed action. It is possible to use one's right to self-defense both individually and collectively. The use of force in self-defense against an armed attack must be both appropriate and necessary for it to be legal. The question of whether the right to self-defense includes the ability to defend oneself against a non-state actor's armed attack or the ability to defend oneself beforehand is still up for debate. Similar disputes surround other alleged exceptions, such as the use of force in accordance with the responsibility to protect concepts or humanitarian intervention.

The Concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and Humanitarian Intervention

The idea known as "responsibility to protect" (R2P) holds that when citizens are in danger or are vulnerable, the Westphalian principles of non-intervention are

abandoned, and the international community is required to defend the civilians to stop crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, and ethnic cleansing. The UNSC must successfully authorize the use of force in order to carry out Responsibility to Protect (R2P). This has only ever happened once in history, in Libya, when military action was employed to overthrow the Gaddafi dictatorship. China and Russia abstained during the vote.

Nuclear Weapons

One kind of weapon of mass devastation is the nuclear bomb. The US government's covert Manhattan Project, which produced very potent weapons, marked the start of the nuclear era. When the Japanese Empire was victorious and the Nazis were vanquished, these weapons brought an end to World War II battling in its military endeavors. These attempts came to a stop when two industrial centers were struck by nuclear weapons. Although aircraft are used to deliver nuclear bombs from the sky, technological advancements have led to the widespread employment of ballistic missiles, which are owned by several nations. Over time, technical advancements have enhanced precision, and it now has an incredible potential for destruction. Nuclear weapons can be either thermonuclear (hydrogen bomb, H-bomb) or fission/atomic (atom bomb, A-bomb).

Nuclear submarines, which are employed for covert operations and carry nuclear warheads placed on submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) are examples of more technologically sophisticated ones. American and Russian technological dominance reigns in this regard. The majority of contemporary nuclear weapons are carried by intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) or cruise

missiles, which are short-range, highly accurate tactical weapons that may ostensibly be used to target battlefield objectives while ground forces are engaged in combat. The P528 of the UNSC (the US, UK, Russia, which lawfully inherited the Soviet Union, PRC, and France), India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea are the nine members of the "nuclear club" that possess nuclear weapons. During the Cold War, the P5 attempted to limit and eventually eliminate the possession of nuclear weapons by any state.

Nuclear weapons may be obtained by enriching uranium or reprocessing plutonium. States that have attempted to get them in the past include Iran, Iraq during the Saddam dictatorship, and Libya during the Gaddafi regime.

The two most recent examples of states successfully developing nuclear weapons are North Korea in 2006, which is still pursuing its nuclear agenda, and the people who allegedly run an international network to provide nuclear proliferation capacity to Pakistan's allies. In both cases, the PRC's fundamental role

in transferring nuclear technology is undeniable, as the Chinese aim to balance South Korea, Japan, and India in Asia. States desire to spread nuclear weapons for a variety of reasons.

One of the primary causes of governments facing a security dilemma is conflict with neighbors and geopolitical rivalries; as one state builds its deterrent capability, the competitor feels "insecure" and decides to build its own. For instance, in the face of territorial conflicts, ethnic, religious, and geopolitical opponents countries might feel the need to proliferate their weapons. Countries may involve: North Korea, India, Pakistan, Israel. Since nuclear weapons are viewed as the "great equalizers" that serve as a mechanism for power balance, they also promote worldwide equality.

Pakistan tried to offset India's growing influence in conflicts when it produced its own nuclear weapon in 1974. Another instance is Israel, which in the Middle East confronted a unified front against its geopolitical enemies during the Cold War and felt surrounded by them. A different cause behind nuclear spread ties to recognition, Britain and France saw global influence fade after World War I, so pursuing atomic weapons became a way to keep power, especially as lasting UN Security Council members; thus, their aim shifted toward building nukes not mainly to counter potential Soviet threats, but to gain stronger standing worldwide.

NPT

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) stops countries from spreading nuclear arms while supporting their removal. Signed in 1968, it became active by 1970. Many see it as the beginning of worldwide efforts against nuke spread - also key to pushing disarmament forward.

The agreement includes a preface plus twelve sections. Following this introduction, the stage is set by addressing risks tied to atomic conflict alongside calls for arms reduction. Benefits linked to non-military nuclear advances are outlined as well, along with aspirations toward broad disarmament accords. This pact - known as the NPT - seeks to limit nukes spreading past the five recognized weapon states, at the same time supporting peaceful atomic energy uses. Countries leading in civil nuclear power are Germany, Japan, South Korea, Armenia, France, Canada, or Ukraine. Italy had reactors before but now forbids them by law.

Nuclear arms are extremely dangerous; therefore, they balance power between powerful and weaker countries. However, producing them is far harder than other large-scale weapons. Signed in 1968, the NPT became active by 1970, later made permanent in 1995. It works to stop weapon proliferation, support safe nuclear energy, while pushing gradual disarmament.

The NPT divides countries into two groups: those with nuclear weapons and those without. Among the nuclear-armed nations are the U.S., Russia - formerly the Soviet Union - the UK, France, and China. All others fall into the non-nuclear category. In return for IAEA monitoring to stop fissile material from being used in bombs, nuclear states promised help with peaceful atomic energy programs. As part of the deal, they pledged efforts toward eventually eliminating their arsenals.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a global deal meant to stop the spread of atomic arms. While nuclear-armed nations are barred from helping others build such weapons, they must also refrain from transferring related technology. As part of adherence, countries without nukes agree to inspections by the IAEA covering every type of nuclear material at home. On condition of this oversight, member states commit to sharing access to civilian nuclear power.

Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes to accept safeguards, as set forth in an agreement to be negotiated and concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency in accordance with the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Agency's safeguards system, for the exclusive purpose of verification of the fulfillment of its obligations assumed under this Treaty with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Procedures for the safeguards required by this Article shall be followed with respect to source or special fissionable material, whether it is being produced, processed, or used in any principal nuclear facility or is outside any such facility. The safeguards required by this Article shall be applied to all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of such State, under its jurisdiction, or carried out under its control anywhere.

1. Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

2. Non-nuclear-weapon State Parties to the Treaty are required to accept safeguards set forth in an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency to verify the fulfillment of their obligations and prevent the diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or explosive devices. These safeguards apply to all sources or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the state's territory, under its jurisdiction, or

carried out under its control. State Parties are not to provide source or special fissionable material or equipment for processing, use, or production of special fissionable material to non-nuclear-weapon States for peaceful purposes unless subject to the safeguards required by this Article. The safeguards must be implemented in a manner that does not hinder the economic or technological development of the parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities. Non-nuclear-weapon States Parties must conclude agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency to meet the requirements of this

Article, either individually or together with other states. Negotiation of such agreements must commence within 180 days of the Treaty's entry into force.

3. Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of this Treaty. 2. All the Parties to the Treaty undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Parties to the Treaty in a position to do so shall also cooperate in contributing alone or together with other States or international organizations to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty, with due consideration for the needs of the developing areas of the world.

4. Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, nuclear disarmament and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Critics argue that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has limited correlation with nuclear non-proliferation. However, the treaty is largely effective due to states' recognition of its necessity, its functioning framework, and

members' preference for its continued existence. The NPT has prevented most signatories from violating their non-proliferation obligations through incentives, safeguards, and international consensus. In 1995, member states agreed to extend the treaty, and over 130 have ratified an additional protocol, strengthening safeguards for IAEA inspectors to access nuclear fuel cycles, buildings, manufacturing sites, and environmental samples.

Critics claim the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty doesn't strongly affect actual non-proliferation outcomes. Still, it works well because countries see value in it, rely on its structure, or want it to last. Instead of punishment, rewards, monitoring, and global agreement keep most nations compliant. By 1995, participants decided to continue the pact indefinitely; meanwhile, more than 130 adopted a follow-up measure enhancing inspection rights - allowing checks on materials, facilities, production centers, and surroundings.

Countries like India, Pakistan, Israel, South Sudan, and North Korea haven't approved the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Instead of gaining access to strong arms, non-nuclear nations agreed to restrictions under the deal. Because of this risk, every country - even those already armed - faces threats from wider atomic spread. By 2009, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1887, pushing holdout countries toward joining the pact. That year, US President Barack Obama led the council session, appealing directly for universal participation.

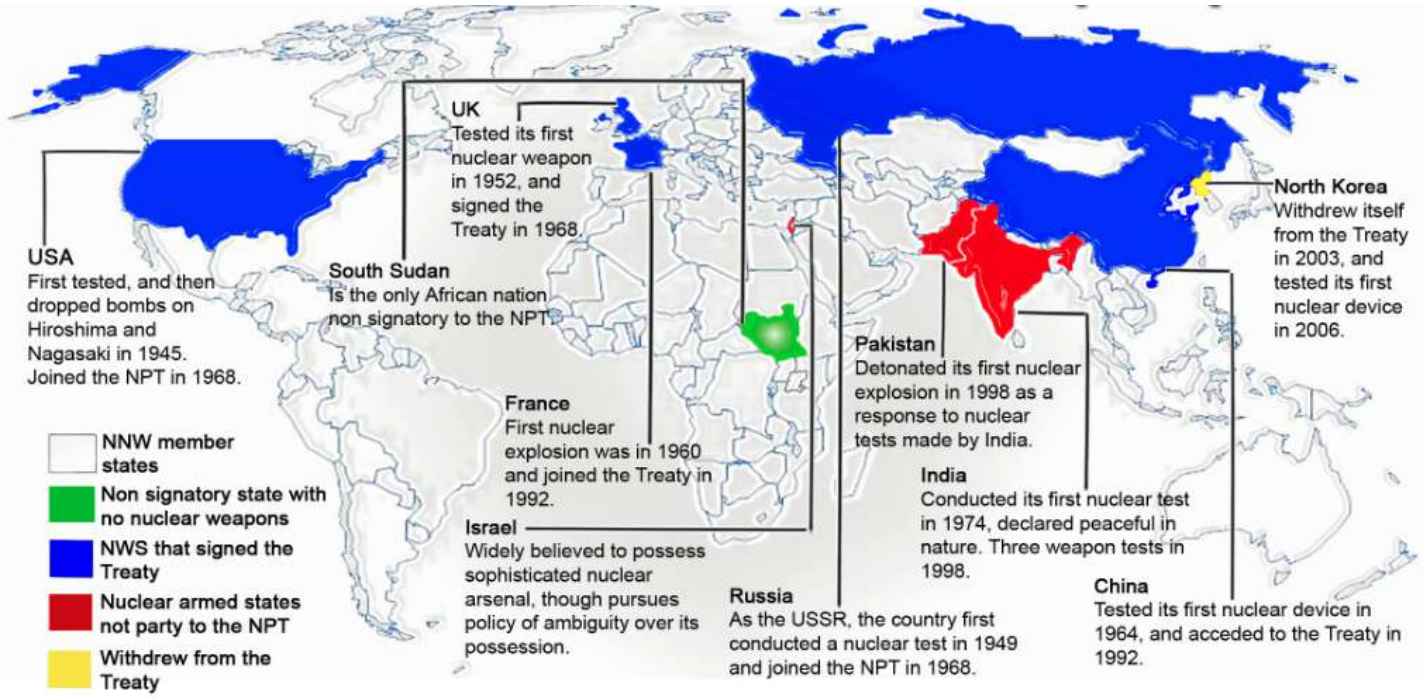
The National Nuclear Threat Treaty involves intricate rules needing cooperation between countries along with tight oversight, sometimes causing doubt among members and questions about independence. Cooperation under the NPT means non-nuclear weapon states must allow checks - like IAEA inspections - to qualify for civilian nuclear support. Over time, this framework exposed violations or questionable military research by nations such as Iran, North Korea, South Korea, even Egypt.

Regime type ties closely to nuclear choices, though democracies show a small tendency toward going atomic compared to authoritarian systems. Research indicates elected governments pursue nukes more often - perhaps driven by national pride or leaders in hybrid regimes leveraging weapon programs to shift public focus from internal issues. Another factor could be the appeal of rallying patriotic sentiment to strengthen voter support and extend time in office.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty struggles with five key issues threatening its effectiveness. One involves continued weapons pursuits by countries such as North Korea or Iran. Another stems from rising nationalist trends worldwide. Tensions between major nuclear-armed nations have also deepened lately. Meanwhile, the IAEA confronts heavier demands than before. On top of this, divisions within the treaty’s membership continue widening.

This was how things stood back in 2015.

Noncompliance to the NPT is not unexpected, as it allows states to avoid being seen as defiant and untrustworthy. However, the non-membership policy is



a strategic choice for not following the international regime on nuclear proliferation, while also avoiding being seen as defiant and untrustworthy. State governments will choose the non-membership policy if its utility is greater than compliance.

When choosing between full compliance and non-membership policies, a state government will choose the non-membership policy if its utility is greater than that of compliance. The likelihood of choosing non-membership decreases when non-nuclear states are more sensitive to the benefits of compliance, when domestic coalitions' support of non-proliferation policy is strong, and when the disadvantages to non-member states are great.

The likelihood of choosing non-membership increases when domestic opposition to compliance with NPT requirements and the opportunity costs of giving up a nuclear option increase. The International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) must be able to provide sufficient incentives through the NPT framework to incentivize the state to remain a member and abide by the non-proliferation policy.

When choosing between full compliance and cheating policy, a state government will also choose the cheating policy if its utility is greater than that of compliance. The likelihood of choosing a cheating policy increases when the IAEA cannot impose effective sanctions on cheating states when the probability of discovery of cheating actions is sufficiently low, and when a state government needs nuclear weapons due to security threats but also needs the benefits of NPT membership.

4.2 Background of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran nuclear agreement, was the result of a continued international effort which aimed to restrict Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief and additional provisions. It also included the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions against Iran, in compliance with the EU's standpoint that Iran must never be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon and that the state must act in accordance with its legally binding nuclear safeguard responsibilities under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In July 2015, the agreement was finalized, which meant that the United Nations Security Council approved Iran's

nuclear agreement. 3 months after the approval, the agreement came into effect.

Iran started its work with its nuclear programme in the 1950s with the guidance of the United States of America. The state signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement in 1970 and conducted nuclear-related agreements such as the manufacture of the Bushehr nuclear rector but the 1979 Islamic Revolution interrupted the process. The revolution can be summarized as a major social and political change for the country, whose effect on its nuclear policies with the West was undeniable. After the revolution, the war between Iraq and Iran began, which meant that the country had to terminate its nuclear programme throughout the war. Despite ceasing its nuclear programme, the country kept in touch with Pakistan, China and Russia in order to cooperate to recover the program moderately. These attempts were successful and in 1995, Russia committed to finalizing the Bushehr reactor and developing three new reactors for Iran. These actions between Iran, Pakistan, China and Russia escalated international concerns upon Iran's civilian nuclear programme. In August 2002, the

suspicions were confirmed when an Iranian opposition group revealed the existence of two covert nuclear facilities under construction in Iran, one of them being a heavy water production plant at the city of Arak and a "fuel production" plant at the city of Natanz.

On 18 December 2003, Iran's ambassador and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General signed an Additional Protocol to Iran's Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty on Nuclear Safeguards, which meant that the state allowed IAEA's inspectors significant power in demonstrating Iran's nuclear programme. The Additional Protocol requires countries to provide an expanded declaration of their nuclear activities and grants the Agency more inclusive rights of permission to access to sites in the country. This action is significant because it is Iran's first official response to the international suspicions upon its nuclear programme. Despite signing the protocol, Iran did not fully adhere to these obligations. In 2004, Iran accepted the Paris agreement, which meant that the state would commit to the suspension of enrichment, as well as to negotiations in order to mediate a long- term deal on "objective guarantees" that its nuclear programme would be peaceful in nature.

In return, Iran was offered some benefits such as trade discussions and the possibility of petitioning for membership of the World Trade Organization. Presidential Elections of Iran were held in 2005, and the newly selected President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was known for his ultra-conservative views as well as being against cooperation with the West. Following the election, Iran declined a package of proposals from European negotiators which offered long-term support for Iran's civil nuclear programme and

the state resumed uranium enrichment. In 2006, the state terminated its voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol.

These actions of Iran escalated international tensions and resulted in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) referring Iran's case to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The newly formed P5+1 group (made up of the UNSC's permanent members in addition with Germany) called for cooperation with Iran, and proposed nuclear fuel for the Tehran research reactor in exchange for the suspension of enrichment and the reapplication of the Additional Protocol. Nevertheless, continued Iranian defiance prompted the P5+1 to threaten sanctions, which approximately began in July 2006 through UNSC Resolution. In spite of these operations, Iran accelerated its nuclear work as well as initiating a heavy-water production facility in Arak and increasing activities at its Fordow enrichment plant. Throughout 2007 and 2008, Iran continued to disregard UNSC resolutions and P5+1 proposals, and rather accelerated its enrichment activities.

In 2008, US presidential elections were held, and the newly formed President Obama's policy shifted towards a more dimensional Iran strategy that incorporated direct US association in negotiations with Iran. Following the election, 5+1 negotiations proceeded in 2009. These negotiations concentrated on a fuel swap arrangement that was eventually rejected by Iran.

In 2010, Turkiye and Brazil arranged their own nuclear fuel swap deal, which was accepted by Iran but rejected by international negotiators.

UNSCR 1929 was passed in 2010, permitting UN member states to impose sanctions on significant Iranian economic sectors. Further periods of discussion continued to focus on Iran's repeated demand for sanctions relief as a necessity for negotiations. In the course of this period, the country also carried on with requesting recognition of its right to enrichment, which eventually led to the negotiation of the JCPOA.

In 2012, a secret communication channel was initiated between the United States of America and Iran, independent from the international negotiations that were happening with the P5 +1. This carried the situation to the wider P5+1 discussion group.

As a result of these discussions, a temporary nuclear agreement, the Joint Plan of Action (JCPOA), was declared on 24 November 2013. According to this agreement, Iran consented to limit any further advances of its activities. Several sanctions relief was presented, in return for Iran eliminating its stockpile of 20 per cent enriched uranium, concluding enrichment to that amount, and freezing its stockpile of 3.5 per cent enriched uranium.

Throughout the following two years, the sides met many times and had to extend their agreed deadline, finalizing the JCPOA on 14 July 2015 .

4.3 Key Parties and Provisions of the JCPOA

The JCPOA was signed between Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and was endorsed by UN Security

Council Resolution 2231 on July 20, 2015. Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities that could lead to the manufacture of weapons-grade uranium or plutonium upon its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

The Key Parties of the JCPOA are Iran, P5+1 Countries and the European Union for its role as a facilitator throughout the negotiations. Iran was the main concern of the agreement, while some of the P5+1 countries such as the United States (until the withdrawal in 2018) and the United Kingdom were essential negotiators of it. The United Kingdom acted as a mediator between the United States and Iran, and kept being active after the US withdrawal in 2018. Germany contributed technical comprehension to the nuclear verification structure, while France and Russia supported it diplomatically. China supported the agreement for its stabilizing reasons. As mentioned above, the European Union External Action Service (EEAS) served as the facilitator of the agreement and published an Information Note detailing the EU nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions that were lifted.

The agreement limited the amount and type of centrifuges in operation, the level of uranium enrichment and the size of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile. Essential facilities at Fordo, Natanz and Arak cities of Iran were reshaped for civilian uses like medical and industrial research. Iran consented authority to more detailed IAEA observing procedures of its nuclear related activities.

In return, the state was relieved from nuclear-related sanctions imposed by the United Nations, the European Union and the United States, but it is important to note that several of the United States of America’s sanctions targeting areas outside of the state’

nuclear programme such as Iran's missile program, support for militant groups, and human rights record remained. The agreement also set a timetable to lift the United Nations arms embargo, dependent on Iran's sustained compliance with civilian nuclear commitments.

The agreement came into effect on 20 January 2016. On 8 May 2018, the President of the United States announced the withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Here are some of the Provisions directly from the Agreement:

i. The full implementation of this JCPOA will ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

ii. Iran reaffirms that under no circumstances will Iran ever seek, develop or acquire any nuclear weapons.

iii.. Successful implementation of this JCPOA will enable Iran to fully enjoy its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the relevant articles of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in line with its obligations therein, and the Iranian nuclear programme will be treated in the same manner as that of any other non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT.

iv. This JCPOA will produce the comprehensive lifting of all UN Security Council sanctions as well as multilateral and national sanctions related to Iran’s nuclear programme, including steps on access in areas of trade, technology, finance and energy.

As mentioned previously, the agreement included the United States of America and withdrawal of the country had results. Some of these were:

After the United States left, the country imposed the sanctions again, which isolated Iran from international banking, global markets, and foreign investment. This meant that the JCPOAlost its economic benefits for Iran, which was the backbone of the agreement. As the agreement lost its economic benefits for Iran, the state eventually began to take down its commitments.

The withdrawal of the US also caused separation between the parties of the agreement. The agreement depended on cooperation among P5+1 members, and when the US broke this cooperation, the country limited the effectiveness and functions of the JCPOA mainly because of the economic complications.

4.4 U.S. Withdrawal and Its Consequences

In 2018 the United States, under the administration of President Donald Trump, autonomously withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Because the country believed Iran could still pursue nuclear weaponry. The withdrawal switched the way countries deal with nuclear threats. This decision was the initiation of a carefully planned strategy to disintegrate the agreement, based on a fundamental review of U.S. interests and a criticism of the treaty. Following the withdrawal came the “Maximum Pressure” push to force Iran into fresh talks but instead untangled the rewards meant to keep Iran cooperating,starting a never-ending cycle. The main complaints focused on how temporary the deal was that those sunset provisions meant limits on Iran’s uranium work and centrifuge studies would end

from 2025 to 2030. Seen this way, the agreement didn’t stop Iran’s proliferation progress but just pushed it back, yet handed the government big money by lifting sanctions.

After the withdrawal, the U.S. brought back many economic penalties aimed at Iran’s oil sales, banks, and major industries. Because of these measures, Iran faced serious money difficulties such as dropping oil income while rising prices, sparking public anger inside the country. America didn’t just restart old nuclear-linked penalties - it added fresh ones hitting parts of Iran’s economy that weren’t targeted before. The most paramount issue was the strict use of secondary penalties, warning foreign firms or banks they’d lose access to American finance if they kept dealing with Iran. This reach of U.S. law beyond its borders hit hard, pushing most big global companies out of Iran - slitting the country’s essential oil sales from around 2.5 million barrels daily down to less than half a million. As a result, the economy tanked, prices rose highly. The most harmful impact was the aggressive enforcement of secondary sanctions, which threatened to cut off from the U.S. financial system any foreign company or financial institution that continued to do business with Iran. The economic situation caused a deep recession, hyperinflation, and hardship for the Iranian population. On top of that, tensions flared between the U.S. and Europe who wanted to keep supporting the nuclear deal but couldn't act freely. They set up a workaround called the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges INSTEX to move essential goods, yet it barely worked; fear of American penalties scared off banks and businesses across Europe. Their efforts to create a special-purpose vehicle INSTEX, to facilitate

humanitarian trade were unable to withstand the effect of U.S. secondary sanctions on European commercial and banking interests.

The U.S. withdrawal also strained diplomatic relations between Iran and the remaining JCPOA signatories (the UK, France, Germany, Russia, and China). The EU tried keeping things going using tools like INSTEX, meant to help trade keep moving. Still, the Iranian Government was not supporting these tools. So over time, Iran started reducing what it had agreed to do under the deal.

Unfortunately, the consequences of the U.S. withdrawal extended beyond economics. The withdrawal heightened regional tensions, particularly with Israel and Saudi Arabia, and increased uncertainty about Iran's nuclear intentions. Without the states standing together globally, trust in joint deals weakened. Without cooperation and the support of major countries, diplomacy tends to break, which this withdrawal clearly showed.

4.5 Current Status of Iran's Nuclear Program

Since 2019, Iran has gradually scaled back its JCPOA obligations in response to the U.S. withdrawal and the reimposition of sanctions. Iran has increased its stockpiles of enriched uranium, enriched at levels exceeding those permitted under the original deal, and resumed work on advanced centrifuge models.

According to reports from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran's uranium enrichment levels have reached up to 60% in some facilities, significantly higher than the 3.67% limit set by the JCPOA. It also got back into developing

newer, faster centrifuges again. Still, the state insists its atomic efforts are meant only for power generation or healthcare uses. Iran’s moved to block IAEA inspections at some sites, sparking doubts over how transparent their nuclear actions really are.

The current situation represents a fragile balance: Iran asserts its sovereign right to develop nuclear technology for civilian purposes, while the international community remains cautious about potential military dimensions. The country insists it's allowed to build nuclear tech for everyday use, yet countries worldwide still have concerns stating that Iran might also aim for weapons. This non-ending debate causes the stability in the region to be weak, shared rules against spreading nuclear warheads get tested, trust in cooperation efforts to handle atomic risks starts declining.

Facing harsh economic pressure, and no noticeable support from Europe on lifting penalties, Iran dropped its wait-and-see approach. Instead, starting in May 2019, it began slowly breaking promises made under the nuclear deal. While doing so, Tehran pointed to clauses 26 and 36 - allowing fixes when others don't hold up their end. Rather than staying passive, they pushed back step by step, initiated a calculated policy of "counter-pressure” hoping to gain power at talks and get financial breathing room. But this risky shift changed everything: Iran’s atomic progress advanced fast. Beginning in May 2019, Tehran commenced a calculated breach of its JCPOA commitments, a move it justified under Articles 26 and 36 of the agreement, which provide for remedial actions in the case of non-performance by other countries. This tit-for-tat strategy was designed to create pressure and force the remaining JCPOA participants, and in the long run, the United States. However, this dangerous plan has essentially altered the nuclear landscape, advancing Iran's program to a point of

extraordinary capability and drastically reducing the time it would need to produce material for a nuclear weapon.

To master enrichment up to 60% makes reaching weapons-grade levels much easier, since key hurdles are already overcome. In addition, Iran uses modern IR-2m and IR-4 centrifuges - machines stronger than the basic IR-1 models allowed by the JCPOA. Because of this shift, their ability to quickly build bomb fuel has grown sharply. Where once it took over a year to gather enough material, current assessments suggest it could now take just several weeks. As a result, there's almost no room left for delay or misstep in negotiations.

The agency continues to deal with unanswered concerns about unreported human-made uranium traces found at multiple locations in Iran, suggesting prior or even continuing nuclear work not disclosed to the IAEA, as mandated by its safeguards pact. Such gaps challenge core principles of non-proliferation, calling into question whether Iran's nuclear reports are accurate and complete. In 2021, matters worsened when Iran took out 27 IAEA surveillance cameras and disabled real-time monitoring tools, storing them under official seals. While limited oversight has returned since then, missing data weakens confidence, leaving inspectors unable to confirm fully that all activity remains civilian. These lapses deepen mistrust between parties, could hide covert efforts, while making talks on reviving the JCPOA far harder, since trust and clarity now serve as shaky bases for any new understanding.

4.6 Role of IAEA and International Oversight

As mentioned previously, The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been active throughout the whole process of the JCPOA. While the negotiations of P5+1 were going on, the agency was in charge of monitoring, verifying and reporting Iran's nuclear activities.

Before the foundation of the JCPOA, the agency supplied P5+1 countries with technical advice and information based on the agency's experience of safeguards implementation as well as providing clear assessment of the situation at each stage. One example would be: In 2002, an Iranian opposition group claimed that Iran had nuclear facilities under construction at Natanz and Arak which it had not declared. The agency started to look into the matter. In June 2003, the first IAEA report was published, which indicated that Iran was building uranium enrichment facilities at Natanz and a heavy water production plant at Arak.

After the implementation of the JCPOA, The IAEA began to take on the verification and monitoring processes of Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the agreement. The Agency's inspectors were active 24/7 and they used equipment like permanently installed cameras and other sensors in order to observe Iran's nuclear facilities, centrifuge manufacturing and testing locations. As mentioned previously, the Additional Protocol gave access to the agency for more locations, which has provided the Agency with more information about Iran's nuclear programme.

After the withdrawal of the US, the Agency documented breaching of JCPOA's limits such as enrichment rising and decreased transparency. As the JCPOA weakened, the

Agency continued to attempt to act as a mediator, although it couldn't prevent the termination of the agreement.

On 18 October 2025, the JCPOA was terminated. After the termination, the Agency's role was mainly reduced to the standard NPT safeguards, which gave the Agency less access to monitor the country's nuclear activities.

When it comes to the role of International Oversight, we would like to mention again that the IAEA is the main oversight organ. Other than the IAEA, the United Nations Security Council played an important role in endorsing the JCPOA through Resolution 2231.

4.8 Threats to Non Proliferation and Global Security

The JCPOA' s main goal was to limit and monitor Iran's nuclear activities in order to ensure safety and stability as well as to enhance transparency. However, several circumstances have threatened member states and the agreement.

One of these is the disintegration of validation and monitoring. As mentioned previously, IAEA monitors and provides information upon Iran's nuclear activities. In 2024, the E3 which was composed of France, Germany and the UK gave a joint statement to the IAEA upon Iran's implementation of its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA. In the statement, it was mentioned that Iran continued blocking the monitoring of the IAEA, causing destructive implications for verification and monitoring. It was also mentioned that the Agency has lost progression of knowledge in relation to centrifuges, rotors and bellows, heavy water and uranium ore

concentrate. Moreover, Iran stopped temporarily applying its Additional Protocol, stripping the Agency of complementary access.

Another one would be the weakening of diplomacy between countries. Especially after the 2018 withdrawal of the US, the diplomatic ties between countries upon the agreement wore out. After the United States withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018, nuclear-related sanctions were reapplied. In consequence, Iran eventually ceased observing major restrictions of the agreement. Under the JCPOA, Iran was supposed to keep enrichment capped at 3.67% and maintain a restricted stockpile of low-enriched uranium. However, in the following years since U.S. withdrawal, Iran has enriched up to 60% and gathered way more matter than the treaty permitted. A 2024 research published by the House of Commons mentions that by 2022–2024, Iran's approximate "breakout time" (the time needed to produce enough weapons-grade material for each device) had fallen to almost zero. Other governments and professionals viewed this situation as a direct threat to the global non-proliferation control because it increases the risk of miscalculation and anticipatory attacks.

Moreover, regional instability and insecurity plays a major role as a threat against the JCPOA. The Middle East region, which includes Iran who is the main subject of the agreement, is at high risk for potential wars and conflict. Increased levels of enrichment escalates worries among other Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia and Israel, which both have complicated and unstable relationships with Iran. This increases the risk of potential nuclear conflicts between the countries, reinforcing regional tensions and undermining non proliferation by pushing countries to formalize

nuclear development plans. This tit-for-tat strategy among nations further increased the polarisation and tension internationally.

The last point is that the general dropping of the JCPOA has weakened the universal non-proliferation framework, including the previously mentioned NPT. As Iran expands its nuclear capabilities without increased oversight, trust in multilateral arms-control agreements declines, possibly encouraging other nations to consider similar policies. This cycle calls attention to the critical need for revitalized mechanisms as well as creating longstanding dangers to non-proliferation and global security.

5. Key Terms and Definitions

Arms Proliferation: The spread or increase of weapons, particularly advanced or nuclear weapons, among states or non-state actors.

Autonomous Oblast: A type of administrative region in the Soviet Union with a degree of self-governance, such as Nagorno-Karabakh within the Azerbaijan SSR.

Ballistic Missile Program: A program for developing missiles capable of delivering nuclear or conventional warheads over long distances.

Ceasefire: A temporary suspension of hostilities between conflicting parties, often preceding negotiations or peace agreements.

Confidence-Building Measures: Actions taken by states to reduce tensions and foster trust, such as military transparency or arms-control agreements.

Conflict Displacement: The forced movement of civilians due to armed conflict, exemplified by mass displacements in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Economic Sanctions: Restrictions imposed by one or more countries on trade, finance, or other economic activities to influence a state's behavior.

IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency): The UN agency responsible for monitoring nuclear programs, verifying compliance, and promoting peaceful nuclear use.

INSTEX (Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges): A European mechanism designed to facilitate trade with Iran while bypassing U.S. sanctions.

Iran Nuclear Deal / JCPOA: The 2015 agreement between Iran and P5+1 countries limiting Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

Land Corridor / Zangezur Corridor: A planned route linking Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan and Turkey, passing through southern Armenia.

Nagorno-Karabakh: A mountainous, ethnically Armenian-majority region internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan.

Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) : An international treaty aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and promoting peaceful nuclear energy.

Peacekeeping / UN Mediation: UN-led operations or diplomatic efforts aimed at maintaining peace or facilitating negotiations between conflicting parties.

Regional Security: The stability and protection of a geographic area from conflict, militarization, or external threats.

Second Nagorno-Karabakh War: The 2020 military conflict in which Azerbaijan reclaimed territories previously occupied by Armenian forces.

Security Dilemma: A situation in which one state's defensive measures are perceived as threatening by another, prompting arms build-up.

U.S. Withdrawal (from JCPOA): The 2018 unilateral exit of the United States from the Iran nuclear deal, leading to renewed tensions and sanctions.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO): Military munitions that did not detonate as intended and remain a hazard in conflict zones.

Unilateral: An action taken by one state independently, without the involvement or agreement of other countries.

Bilateral: An action, negotiation, or agreement between two states.

Multilateral: An action or agreement involving three or more states, often within international organizations or alliances.

Prisoners of War (POWs): Individuals captured and detained by an enemy during an armed conflict, protected under international humanitarian law.

Weapon Modernization: The upgrading of military equipment and technology to enhance combat effectiveness, e.g., UAVs and precision munitions in Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict.

Breakout Time: The estimated time required for a state to produce enough fissile material for a single nuclear weapon. A key metric in assessing proliferation risk.

Bayraktar TB2: A Turkish-made armed unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that played a decisive role in the 2020 war, used for surveillance and precision strikes.

IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons): People who have been forced to flee their homes but have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

Lachin Corridor: The mountain road connecting Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh, placed under the control of Russian peacekeepers after the 2020 war.

Loitering Munition: A type of aerial weapon system (often called a "suicide drone") that can circle over a target area before attacking by crashing into its target.

Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic: A landlocked exclave of Azerbaijan, bordering Armenia, Turkey, and Iran.

Right of Return: A principle in international law affirming the right of refugees and IDPs to return to their homes of origin.

Enrichment (Uranium): The process of increasing the percentage of the isotope U-235 in uranium to make it usable for nuclear power or weapons.

Extraterritoriality (of Sanctions): The application of a country's laws to conduct occurring outside its borders, a key feature of the U.S. "secondary sanctions."

Fordow: A heavily fortified Iranian underground uranium enrichment facility, which was repurposed under the JCPOA but has since resumed enrichment activities.

IR-1 / IR-6 Centrifuges: Machines used to enrich uranium by spinning at high speeds. IR-1 is Iran's first-generation model; IR-6 is a more advanced, efficient model whose use was restricted by the JCPOA.

Maximum Pressure: The U.S. policy campaign initiated after its 2018 withdrawal from the JCPOA, involving the comprehensive re-imposition and expansion of sanctions on Iran.

Sunset Provisions: Clauses in the JCPOA that set expiration dates for key restrictions.

Verification: The process by which the IAEA monitors and inspects nuclear facilities to ensure a state is complying with its non-proliferation commitments.

Clandestine activities: Secret or covert actions carried out to avoid detection, typically involving hidden operations that violate agreements or international norms.

6. Questions To Be Addressed

1. What is the current state of the nuclear non-proliferation attempts' results such as NPT?
2. When looking at past events, how can the implications of JCPOA be outlined?
3. How can Iran's compliance with the JCPOA be ensured while expressing the state's concerns regarding sovereignty?
4. Which operations and actions should be taken for the purpose of rebuilding trust between countries after the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement?
5. How can further nuclear escalation be prevented in the Middle East region, considering the urgency of emerging regional tensions?
6. In what way can international sanctions or incentives be used to encourage Member States long-term compliance to non-proliferation frameworks?
7. How has the historical background affected the escalations in the Nagorno-Karabakh districts?
8. How can the regional countries cooperate in order to ensure stability in the region?
9. What steps can be taken to prevent further militarization and arms race in Armenia and Azerbaijan?
10. How can the rights and security of displaced people and civilians in the Nagorno-Karabakh region be secured after the conflict?

11. Should a new peacekeeping or monitoring mechanism be presented under UN management in order to assure ceasefire stability?
12. How can disarmament and confidence-building measures promote settlement in the region?

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